

THE AMERICAN DIPLOMA PROJECT

Recommendation

The chairs of the Kentucky Board of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education recommend that the P-16 Council facilitate Kentucky's implementation of the American Diploma Project.

Background

Kentucky is one of five states asked by the ADP to participate in a pilot project to align high school assessment and graduation proficiency standards with the performance demands of postsecondary education and the workplace. The ADP is a coalition of national organizations including Achieve, Inc., The Education Trust, the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, and the National Alliance of Business. The goals of the ADP are to assist states to develop programs that include the scope of work and performance level of high school students in the admission and placement policies in postsecondary institutions and in the hiring decisions made by employers.

The ADP is conducting several research projects to assist states with their work. Additionally, a Kentucky team of teachers and faculty in mathematics and language arts evaluated the various measures by which students are assessed from high school through college admissions and workforce entrance. The National Alliance of Business is completing a new economy work skills study to identify the knowledge and skills required for entry-level "good jobs" (knowledge-based, well-paying, and numerous) and the educational path for workers who obtain these jobs. Also, the project consultants have completed an analysis of the legal issues surrounding the ADP.

The policy changes that will be required for Kentucky's implementation of the ADP will involve the member agencies of the P-16 Council. They also will require advice and support from others in the governor's office; the legislature; the Office of the New Economy; civic, business, and labor leaders (such as the Committee on Equal Opportunities, the Partnership for Kentucky Schools, the Prichard Committee, the state Chamber of Commerce, the state AFL-CIO, and the Kentucky Science and Technology Corporation); the heads of postsecondary institutions and school districts; and local P-16 councils.

The P-16 Council, as an advisory board, is best suited to coordinate the process for securing the civic and political leadership needed to create a coherent statewide education, workforce, and economic development policy for Kentucky's citizens. The staffs from the member agencies will work together, under the advisement of the P-16 Council, to create statewide panels of local and state leaders—both to communicate the goals of this project and build support for the policy changes it will require.